

San Jose State University
SJSU ScholarWorks

Expressions (College of Humanities and the Arts)

College of Humanities and the Arts

Winter 2015

Expressions, Winter 2015

San Jose State University, College of the Humanities and the Arts

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/expressions>



Part of the [Arts and Humanities Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

San Jose State University, College of the Humanities and the Arts. "Expressions, Winter 2015" *Expressions (College of Humanities and the Arts)* (2015).

This Newsletter is brought to you for free and open access by the College of Humanities and the Arts at SJSU ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Expressions (College of Humanities and the Arts) by an authorized administrator of SJSU ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@sjsu.edu.



Vol.5 Winter 2015

Featured Stories



Zoot Suit

Alumnus Valdez Returns to SJSU with *Zoot Suit*

Fifty years ago, student Luis Valdez made his theatrical debut on the San José State campus as a playwright-director. From there he graduated and went on to Broadway with his famed play *Zoot Suit*, the story of the zoot suit riots in Los Angeles.

In the theme of “write what you know,” Valdez remembers as a high school student walking through his East San José neighborhood, lugging a stack of books under his arm. He was accosted by members of the Blue Velvet gang, so named because of their stylish blue velveteen jackets emblazoned with their symbol: a red heart with a dagger through it. The leader called out: “Are you just showing off carrying all those books? You lifting weights?”

“I knew they were going to kick my ass,” Valdez determined, so he began chatting with the *pachucos* using their own slang, which he’d learned from his wild cousin, Billy Miranda. “I explained that I was studying so I could go to college, and then I was going to go to law school, and after graduation I would come home and defend them when they wound up in jail.” This bit of fast-talking earned him a hall pass through the ‘hood that day, but this same depiction of how two cultures collide would later earn him the moniker “Father of the Chicano Theatre.”

Before the Valdez clan moved to San José, they had lived in the central California town of Delano. Here Billy provided his younger cousin Luis with another important gift. “I remember he was a cool guy. When I was six he was sixteen, and he had a running partner we called C.C. Back then the movie theaters

were segregated, with the white folks sitting in the center section and Latino and black patrons sitting on the sides. C.C. had been in World War II, and when he came home he decided he was going to sit in the middle with the whites. He was actually arrested, and the police questioned him for a couple of hours. But since he hadn’t broken any official laws, they had to let him go. The next week all the Mexicans were sitting in the middle section of the theater.”

One day when Valdez told his mother that he was returning to Delano to join the farm workers’ struggle, she said: “Oh, you’re going to work with C.C.?”

“C.C.?” he replied. “Is that guy still around?”

“Mijo,” she smiled and added, “don’t you know who C.C. is? He’s César Chávez.”

Thus, through this family connection Valdez began working with Chávez, and formed El Teatro Campesino. C.C. also would make his way into Valdez’s writing as an inspiration for *Zoot Suit*. In the end, cousin Billy wound up with eighteen stab wounds in his chest, and Luis dedicated the play to him. In 1981 *Zoot Suit* became a Hollywood movie directed by the SJSU alum, starring his brother Daniel.

Now Luis Valdez comes full circle, returning to campus for a production of *Zoot Suit* that will be directed by his son Kinan Valdez. The play will be in the University Theatre April 23, 24, 28, 29, 30 and May 1 & 2 at 7 pm, with Valdez giving a talkback on opening night. Tickets available [here](#) soon.

by Cathleen Miller

Featured Stories



El Teatro Campesino: the Farmworker's Theater

At San José State [Luis Valdez](#) studied the theatre arts, examining the works of the ancient Greeks, the Romans, then moving forward to Bertolt Brecht and the concept of exploring the theatre as a forum for political ideas. Valdez also discovered *el teatro campesino* (the farmworker's or peasant's theatre), popular during the Mexican Revolution. These short, one-act plays were designed to instruct and inspire an uneducated population.

After graduation, the SJSU alumnus created El Teatro Campesino, which was born on the picket lines of the Great Delano Grape Strike in 1965. While working with United Farmworkers Union leader [César Chávez](#), "the company created and performed *actos*, or short skits, on flatbed trucks and in union halls, taking the *actos* on tour to dramatize the plight and cause of the farmworkers."

From these authentic roots, El Teatro Campesino has grown to be the preeminent Latino theatrical company in America. In 1971, the company moved permanently to San Juan Bautista. El Teatro Campesino has won many awards over the years including an Obie, an Emmy, a Peabody Award (for excellence in public television), thirteen Bay Area Drama Critics Awards, and numerous Los Angeles Drama Critics Awards.

El Teatro Campesino now is engaged in developing works for the next generation. But for founding artistic director Luis Valdez, the collaborations remain very much a family affair, as he joins with Lupe, his wife of 45 years, who writes and designs costumes, and their sons, Anahuac, Kinan, and Lakin, all of whom write, produce, act, and direct for the stage as well as film.

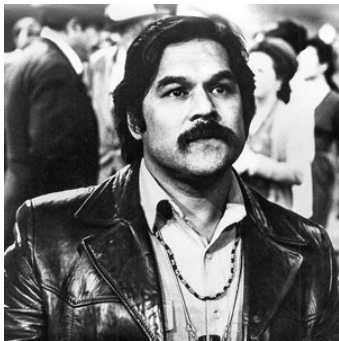
The whole clan has participated in the creation of *Valley of the Heart*, a play Valdez says was influenced by the work of two other SJSU alumni: Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston and her husband, James Houston, authors of *Farewell*

to Manzanar. *Valley* mines California's history and also that of Valdez when his family settled on a farm that the government had seized from a Japanese family during their internment in World War II. "I wanted to capture the multicultural fabric of life in this state," he notes. (Rumor has it that a San José production of *Valley of the Heart* is in the works.)

For decades, Luis Valdez has modeled the advice he offers today's students: "Be prepared to create your own job. Use your ingenuity, creativity, stick-to-itiveness. It's never a mistake to do art. What makes us human is our ability to create, and art enhances our ability to communicate, to create compassion," he says, describing the very traits that have symbolized his career and that also embody the creativity, motivation, and innovation that the College of Humanities and the Arts strives to instill in all students.

by Cathleen Miller

Portraits



Luis Valdez

The Hungry Mouth of Creativity

His theatrical career began because his dad's truck wouldn't start.

Luis Valdez's father was packing up the family, who would be taking down their tent and moving on after they'd finished picking cotton in the San Joaquin Valley. Instead, they watched as all the other migrant workers left for the next location. While Mr. Valdez figured out how to repair the truck, Luis's mother decided to send her six-year-old son to the local school in Stratford. Each day he took his fish taco lunch in a paper sack and, as instructed, carefully brought the sack back home to reuse the next day. One day the sack was missing from the classroom shelf, and he asked his teacher if she knew what had happened to it.

The teacher explained that she had torn it up. She led the frightened boy into a room and showed him something magical that would change his life: she was using his lunch sack to make a paper mache mask of a monkey. "Why are you doing this?" he asked.

He had attended Stratford for only 30 days, but by the time this conversation was over several important things had happened: first, Luis had discovered the arts; second, he had learned that his first-grade class was putting on a play; and third, Luis agreed to star in this production as the monkey, wearing the mask made from his lunch sack.

He eagerly anticipated his moment of glory when the play would premiere in the old school's auditorium on the coming Saturday, with the band playing and the community watching. On Tuesday, however, he learned his family had been evicted from the labor camp and would be leaving town the next day to look for work.

Luis Valdez Luis remembers driving away in the fog, brokenhearted at leaving school and missing his theatrical debut. "During that moment a hole opened up in my chest which

never closed, and I have poured into it my plays and stories. It became the hungry mouth of my creativity."

His family of migrant workers remained on the move, but whether they were living in a tent or a barn, they always carried with them the complete set of *Encyclopædia Britannica* his father had purchased. Neither parent had received the opportunity for much formal education, but they encouraged their children to read.

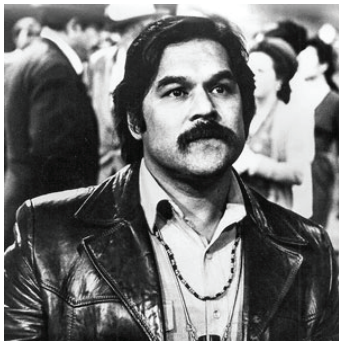
When Mr. Valdez found steady work tending to orchards, the family was able to settle down in East San José. Later Luis graduated from James Lick High and then pursued his dream of attending San José State. He landed a scholarship for math and physics, planning to follow his older brother in becoming an engineer.

In the mornings he'd walk over to meet his cohorts at Winchell's Donuts on Fifth St. before all of them headed to their 7:30 class. He took a short cut through Hugh Gillis Hall, and soon he was peeking around backstage. The flickerings of his early dramatic career—and its painful demise—surfaced. "I decided I can't deny this part of myself—I have to give it a try." During Luis's sophomore year at SJSU he changed his major to English with a playwriting emphasis.

Fifty years later a plaque on the SJSU campus reads: "This site is a landmark in the history of Chicano/Latino theatre."

In the Hal Todd Theatre, Luis Valdez, 1965 San Jose State graduate and world famous playwright and Father of Chicano Theatre in the United States, directed his first full-length play, *The Shrunken Head of Pancho Villa*, on January 14-15, 1965. At the suggestion of Dr. Harold Crain, Department Chair and mentor, Luis became a playwright-director, which led him to create his company, El Teatro

Portraits *(continued)*



Campesino* (The Farmworkers Theatre). Founded in 1965 on the Delano Grape Strike picket lines of Cesar Chavez's United Farm Workers Union, the company created and performed "actos" or short skits on flatbed trucks and in union halls inspired by the lives of their audience. Luis Valdez went on to write and direct successes such as *Zoot Suit* and *La Bamba*, becoming the first Latino to present a play on Broadway.

The College of Humanities and the Arts is proud to have such a distinguished alum and artist as Luis Valdez. His life is an artistic and humanitarian inspiration for all.

Please see our feature stories on [*El Teatro Campesino*](#) and [*Zoot Suit*](#) for more information.

by Cathleen Miller

Portraits



Maria Trejo

Rebellious Student Becomes High School Advisor

The room displayed posters of César Chávez and Frida Kahlo, a wall covered with pictures of current and previous students, and a name plate at the front of the desk: Maria Trejo, Student Advisor. Years ago Trejo, of all people, wouldn't have imagined finding herself here. Who knew that a once rebellious student would be advising at-risk youth, guiding them towards graduation?

"I struggled a bit in high school," she laughs. "I was a bit of a pain at times, I guess. I didn't necessarily push myself, and I wasn't on the university track."

So how did an underachiever end up working as a counselor in an East Side Union District high school?

As a student at San José State University, Trejo struggled to decide on a course of study until she finally chose to work with students. Through her personal experience, she understood the hardships lower-income and culturally diverse students face in the education system. "A lot of talented Latino students get lost in the high student-to-counselor ratio. I wanted to help change this."

As a past at-risk student herself, she identifies with her students. It was through the help and guidance of her teachers that she was able to attend San José State University. She received a bachelor's degree in Spanish, a master's in education, a Pupil Personnel Services Credential, and a teaching credential, all of which helped her get become an advisor at Andrew Hill High School.

Looking back, she thanks her past educators for leading her to the path she now travels.

Through the years several teachers came to her aid in times of need, whether it was for behavioral, educational, or financial issues. "I had great teachers who took care of me.

A teacher once took care of me while my grandmother was in the hospital after suffering a heart attack. She had her own family, but she took me in. I'm assuming that I would have gone to foster care if she hadn't helped me. I was lucky."

Trejo hopes to achieve these same goals with her own students. Her current advising position allows her to meet with more students one-on-one and help them with any social or emotional issues that prevent them from being successful in class: bullying issues, theft, mediations, teacher-student relationships, and much more. "I had a lot of teachers who always took care of me in some way. I have to do the same for my students."

Trejo's students also help her, she claims, because back in 2009 they convinced her to expand her college education and pursue a teaching credential. "The teaching credential gave me more job security, and it was a stepping stone in order to apply for a counseling job or what I do now, campus advisor. I needed to get my foot in the door as a certified employee. It was the right choice."

So what's next for the rebel-turned-counselor?

"I'm focusing on improving how I deal with the discipline issues that we have at school. It's difficult to remain calm at all times when you have the same kids making the same bad choices. Treating kids with respect is important, but also providing structure and setting clear expectations is always something that I want to improve on."

San José State University is the primary source for teacher education in the Bay Area. The College of Humanities and the Arts is proud to serve approximately 500 students seeking a teaching credential in Chinese, Spanish, French, English, Art, Music, Theatre, Creative Arts, and Liberal Studies.

by Yesenia Ortega

Media



Donor Recognition & Scholarship Recipient Reception

Video

The College of Humanities and the Arts' second annual Scholarship Reception was a huge success! Have a look at some photos, as well as the speech given by music major Earnest Little, recipient of the Claude and Alberta Walker Scholarship.

Watch the [video](#) on YouTube.



Digital Media Arts Faculty

See the displayed work of Digital Media Arts Faculty [here](#).

College of H&A Video

Video



We are proud to make public the H&A College Video, produced by our own [Spartan Film Studios](#). Professor/director [Babak Sarrafan](#) teamed up with Hollywood contacts to provide guidance for the students, giving them an opportunity to learn from industry professionals and participate in a high-end production. Previous projects have included MTV-bound music videos, commercials, "[Green Ninja](#)" shorts, and feature films shot each summer.

The outstanding production value of the film might lead one to believe that its creation was a walk in the park. But with only four days to enact the vision, scheduling was a struggle. Sarrafan explained: "Organizing all the programs and locations we had to film was very challenging. We had four days planned and had to work the puzzle for times, availability, and daylight."

But the final product was well worth it. "We had a very positive face-to-face response the day of the premiere, and various kind e-mails from others after watching it online," said Sarrafan. "I'm very pleased that David Kahn [TRFT Department Chair] and Dean Lisa Vollendorf gave us this project and trusted our artistic approach and experience to deliver a quality product." Indeed, Dean Vollendorf is proud of what the students have accomplished with the expert guidance of professors in the College. This is just one of hundreds of H&A projects that help prepare students for careers in the visual and performing arts!

Film Credits:

Writer, Director, and Editor: Babak Sarrafan
Producers: Nick Martinez, Barnaby Dallas, and William (Fred) Guess
Director of Photography: Jim Orr
Key Grip/Gaffer: Chris Burns
Colorist: Rob Sciaratta
Composer: Steven Erickson

Watch the [video](#) on YouTube.

It's a Dean's Life



There is something very special about the start of a new year, but for educators the turning of the year also brings the joy of another semester. The year 2015 has started with a bang as SJSU welcomes 30,000 students back to school!

In the past three years, the College of Humanities and the Arts has taken great strides to unify and strengthen the arts and letters programs, encouraging development and bringing to light the many achievements of the faculty and students. This New Year perhaps marks the biggest step in that goal: the opening of the H&A Student Success Center. Located in Clark Hall room 244, the Success Center is a one-stop shop for students within our college who seek General Education advising. Dean Lisa Vollendorf explained, "Faculty, staff, and students all expressed that we need to find better mechanisms to support students as they progress to degree." Read more [here](#).

This spring brings the promise of a tremendous theatrical lineup in the [Department of TV, Radio, Film, and Theatre](#). As we highlight throughout this edition of the newsletter, we honor Luis Valdez with a production of *Zoot Suit* this spring. We also are proud to be producing the socially important *Dead Man Walking*. A full schedule of events can be found on the [department's website](#).

Would you like to join me at Carnegie Hall this spring? The SJSU Choraliers and Concert Choir under the direction of Dr. Jeffrey Benson will make their Carnegie Hall debut on April 27, 2015. The Choraliers will sing a short program of American music featuring Professor Layna Chianakas, mezzo soprano. The Concert Choir will then perform Gabriel Fauré's *Requiem* with a professional orchestra and soloists from New York under Dr. Benson's direction. You can learn more and support the students' trip by [visiting this link](#).

We are in full recruitment season on campus! Across SJSU we are recruiting sixty-four new faculty members, eight of whom will be in the College of Humanities and the Arts. These eight new professors will teach in areas as

diverse as writing instruction, sculpture, dance, orchestra conducting, philosophy, Chinese, and American Studies. Stay tuned for more information about the new faculty as the year unfolds.

Many major events are scheduled for the next six months. I look forward to the numerous readings scheduled by our [Center for Literary Arts](#). I also look forward to the [Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies](#) exhibit on Beethoven in Politics (which opens in February), the Mari Kodama benefit concert March 15, and the Center's thirtieth anniversary gala on July 24. For more information about the numerous Beethoven events, also [visit this link](#). The [School of Music and Dance](#) has an embarrassment of riches scheduled in the form of concerts and performances this spring, and the [Departments of Art and Art History](#) and [Design](#) will be showcasing student, faculty, and professional artists' work all semester. I also look forward to the Kazuki Fukuda-Abe Endowed Lecture on Japanese Contemporary Art at 5 p.m. in the Student Union on March 6, 2015. There are many more events to attend, so I invite you to bookmark and frequently visit our College [calendar](#) so you don't miss anything!

Spring always brings a sense of joy and optimism, so I close with the warmest wishes to all of you for being part of [College of Humanities and the Arts](#) network of supporters, students, staff, faculty, alumni, and donors. We will continue to educate globally-informed, creative, compassionate citizens this semester, and I will be first in line to express my admiration and thanks to everyone whose work and support makes that education possible.

With warm regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lisa Vollendorf". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Lisa Vollendorf, Dean

News & Congratulations

SUCCESS CENTER OPENS!

Since Lisa Vollendorf's inauguration as Dean, the College of Humanities and the Arts has taken great strides to unify and strengthen the arts and letters programs, encouraging development and bringing to light the many achievements of the faculty and students. This new year perhaps marks the biggest step in that goal: The opening of the H&A Student Success Center.

Located in Clark Hall 244, the Success Center is a one-stop shop for students within our college who seek General Education advising. Dean Lisa Vollendorf explained, "Faculty, staff, and students all expressed that we need to find better mechanisms to support students as they progress to degree."

"We see ourselves as problem solvers," said Anthony Korsund, Director of the Success Center. "We're here to support departments by taking some of the advising responsibilities from faculty advisors, thus allowing them to focus on major advising, graduation applications, substitution forms, and the like."

The Center was funded by SSETF (student success, excellence, and technology fee), enacted by the college's 2012-2013 strategic plan. And so far, the Success Center is earning its keep. "Within the first week, we have had over 240 visitors to the Center," said Korsund. "While our academic advisors have met with 87 students seeking advising."

The Success Center also provides an Internship Lab through the College Marketing and Communications Team, comprised of graphic designers, engineers, a photographer, and editor—all students from their respective majors who collaborate to better represent the college within the community. They hope you enjoy this newsletter!

By Jennifer San Filippo

STUDENTS

College of Humanities and the Arts and College of Engineering teamed up to host the SJSU/ Intel Rapid Prototyping Competition (RPC). Through generous support from Intel Corporation, student teams from the art and engineering departments at SJSU designed and built innovative prototypes using the Intel Galileo microprocessor. Ten teams in competition created products for the Internet Of Things – web connected devices to solve real world problems. Students in teams worked with faculty, Intel, and each other to create working prototypes for a pitch and demo competition hosted at Intel on January 23rd, 2015, resulting in three teams being awarded \$12,000 in scholarships. By combining the creativity and aesthetics of art with the science and technology

of engineering, the SJSU/ Intel Rapid Prototyping Competition is creating new opportunities for collaboration and innovation across different disciplines at San José State University.

English & Comparative Literature: Jessica Keaton, a Teaching Associate and MFA Student in the English Department, was granted a six-month fellowship with the [San Francisco Writer's Grotto](#) from January to June 2015. The fellowship is designed to provide a workspace and support for emerging writers with works-in-progress.

ALUMNI

Art & Art History: Marion Cilker, a San José State graduate and local artist, helped to create a conference that uses the arts as a teaching tool. [See the Mercury News story.](#)

Design: Graphic Design alumna Tani Mitsch recently had her design work displayed at Times Square earlier this year. After graduating in Fall 2013, Tani was soon hired on at Ghirardelli Chocolate Company as a full-time designer. In late December 2014, she was given the Times Square advertisement project. Tani is also a former graphic designer for the College of H&A Marketing and Communications Team. [View her portfolio.](#)

FACULTY

Art & Art History: Art professor Anthony Raynsford published an article in Planning Perspectives entitled "[Urban Contrast and Neo-Toryism: On the Social and Political Symbolism of the Architectural Review's Townscape Campaign.](#)" The article is the most extensive and thorough account to date of the political and theoretical sources of the British Townscape Movement, one of the principal urban design ideologies of the mid-twentieth century.

Art & Art History: Associate Professor Shannon Wright, coordinator of the Spatial Art program, exhibited a series entitled [Scholastic Aptitude](#) at Miami Art Week in December 2014. The three sculptures in the Scholastic Aptitude series are made from notebook and sketchbook paper that has been stack-cut, custom hole-punched a few pages at a time, and then painstakingly spiral-bound. Two of these pieces suggest mountainous terrain, while the third is a woven structure with spiral bindings serving as flexible hinges.

News & Congratulations *(continued)*

Design: [Now and Then](#) is the title of the exhibition that took place in Summer 2014 at Doong Gallery, the design showroom of a renowned Korean type foundry. Invited by his colleague Chang Sik Kim, full-time professor in SJSU's Design department, Jean-Benoit Levy brought 101 posters to be discovered by the local design community. In this exciting new exhibition of posters created mainly in Switzerland for various clients and industries, the Swiss graphic designer who immigrated to California 10 years ago, pays tribute to the form and his country. On view were 41 of Levy's signature posters. Known for his usage of photography combined with typography, dynamic shapes and color combinations, Levy's work carries a unique iconographic and expressive, playful visual discourse to the eyes of viewers. Displayed alongside Levy's work were posters by 30 other Swiss graphic designers culled from Levy's personal collection and spanning three generations: posters designed by his predecessors and teachers that ignited his imagination as a young boy; posters created when he was a young graphic designer exchanging ideas with his peers; and finally posters from today's generation who still find the desire to create street posters. In addition to the show, two lectures took place in Seoul, offering a view on his creative process. For the opening, the two curators mounted the 101 posters in a very dense installation that thrilled the creative senses of many Korean designer.

Design: *Street Sheet* is the bi-monthly newspaper of the Coalition on Homelessness in San Francisco. *Street Sheet* has been redesigned for its 25th anniversary, the result of a long process that began in 2007, when graphic designer and SJSU lecturer Jean-Benoit Levy reached out to *Street Sheet* to ask for help using a prospective redesign of their newspaper as a semester project for his Advanced Typography class. The project was put on hold until early 2014, when the Coalition on Homelessness revived the idea as part of their preparation for their 25th anniversary. Under the lead of Matthew Gerring, former Managing Editor of *The Spartan Daily* and actual *Street Sheet* Editor, they scheduled several meetings reviewing the existing redesign ideas, defining the Coalition's goals for the next *Street Sheet*. Levy received "Ideas that Matter," a grant oriented specifically toward design projects offered by the paper producer Sappi North America. Known for its commitment to support the social change work of designers as part of their corporate social responsibility program, Sappi funded over 500 non-profit projects since 1999, contributing more than \$12.5 million to causes that use design as a positive force in society. Levy and the Coalition on Homelessness put together a plan, applied, and won the grant for their project. The designs included a new logo, a poster campaign throughout San Francisco, an apron for the vendors, and the complete newspaper redesign.

English & Comparative Literature: KQED interviewed Dr. Mary Warner about the concerns of this generation's refusal to read. [Read the full article.](#)

English & Comparative Literature: Jonathan Lovell was honored in the [San José State University Research Foundation's](#) 2014 Research Report. Each year this report profiles five SJSU professors who have received grants during the prior fiscal year. Lovell was named because, as Director of the San José Area Writing Project, his program had received approximately 80K in state and federal funding. In the profile, the Writing Project was lauded as providing "dynamic opportunities for teachers to immerse themselves in new theories, strategies, and activities related to successful writing instruction...The most rigorous component of Writing Project is the Invitational Summer Institute," the Profile goes on to explain. "Teachers focus on their own writing for part of each day, in the belief that one must practice a craft in order to teach it. Much time is also spent collaborating with fellow teachers to develop lesson plans, sharing insights regarding teaching across socio-economic levels, and brainstorming how their instructional practices apply to Common Core standards." The cover of the Annual Report features a watercolor drawing of Lovell as a character in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. In the drawing, Gregory Peck/Atticus Finch is giving Lovell a thumbs-up sign, in honor of his many years of giving workshop demonstrations on this novel.

English & Comparative Literature: The Penn State College of Liberal Arts invited [Cathleen Miller](#), an alumna of PSU, back to campus as part of their [Mary E. Rolling Reading Series](#). Cathy discussed her work, including the biography of UN leader Nafis Sadik: [Champion of Choice](#).

English & Comparative Literature: MFA Coordinator Alan Soldofsky read at the 38th Annual Writers Week Conference at UC Riverside. The conference is the longest-running, free literary event in California and regularly attracts authors in all stages of their career. Alan Soldofsky read from his new poetry collection, *In the Buddha Factory* on February 5.

English & Comparative Literature: Alan Soldofsky and David Koehn's new prosody workbook matches each chapter of the Donald Justice textbook, *Prosody: The Meters of Poetry in English*, with parallel chapters that include summary lecture notes for the instructor, exercises based on excerpts from the Justice text, and exercises based on new supplementary materials. Soldofsky and Koehn classroom tested the workbook's many prosody exercises they wrote last summer during the Fall 2014 semester in Soldofsky's ENGL 131: Undergraduate Poetry Writing class at San José State University. The workbook will be published by Bauhan Press on April 7, with the new edition of the Donald Justice textbook, *The Meters Of Poetry In English*, and will be distributed by the University Press of New England (UPNE).

English & Comparative Literature: English professor Leah Griesmann received a grant of \$10,000 from the Elizabeth George Foundation in support of her fiction.

News & Congratulations *(continued)*

English & Comparative Literature: English professor Edwin Sams will give a 30-minute presentation at the CSU Symposium on University Teaching: "GRIT: Exploring Perseverance, Mindset, and Character in the Classroom" at CSU Los Angeles on March 14.

English & Comparative Literature: On February 17th, English professor Noelle Brada-Williams will speak at Bookbuyers on the topic of Asian American Literature. She is the editor of [Asian American Literature: Discourses & Pedagogies](#), a peer-reviewed online journal.

English & Comparative Literature: Dr. Persis Karim, whose work on literature of the Iranian diaspora has resulted in three published anthologies of Iranian-American literature, is the special guest editor of the March 2015 issue of [World Literature Today](#)—a prestigious magazine that features authors and literature by and about authors from around the globe. This issue, "Writing Beyond Iran" features interviews, poetry, and prose fiction by four writers now living in exile. This issue curated by Dr. Karim includes an interview with Moniro Ravanipour, one of the most prominent female novelists in Iran, who now lives in Nevada; an interview with Iranian cartoonist and graphic memoirist Mana Neyestani who left Iran after serving a three-month jail term for a cartoon that allegedly incited riots in Azerbaijan and who now lives in Paris; a short story by Iranian Baha'i writer Omid Fallahzad who now lives in Massachusetts; and six poems by Mohsen Emami, a poet who now lives and works in Mexico City. Karim's introduction discusses the losses and gains of exile, sorrows and freedoms, and the ways that these writers have reinvented themselves in exile as authors who no longer are solely Iranian writers, but rather, writers of a new "world literature."

English & Comparative Literature: Poetry professor Sally Ashton will give a poetry reading and presentation as part of Symposia: A Series, Gardens of Salonica. Her new poetry will soon be published in *Poet Lore* and *Zyzyva Magazine*.

Linguistics & Language Development: "Kevin Moore's admirable book [*The Spatial Language of Time*] explores the many dimensions involved for 'time as space,' with unprecedented rigor and scholarship" writes Gilles Fauconnier (University of California, San Diego). Dan Slobin (University of California, Berkeley) writes "Moore has contributed an exhaustive and carefully considered reanalysis of the conceptual domains of time and space, showing that conceptions of space also have temporal characteristics." The book analyzes how speakers use spatial words like "front" and "back" to talk about temporal concepts like 'before' and 'after'. There are striking resemblances and also stark contrasts in how diverse languages such as English, Wolof (West Africa), Japanese, and Aymara (South America) use such spatial notions.

The book advances the study of linguistics by providing a coherent explanation of the commonalities and differences regarding how spatial vocabulary is used to talk about time in different languages. Kevin Moore teaches Linguistics, Academic Writing, and General Education in the Linguistics and Language Development department at San José State University. He has been a lecturer at SJSU since the year 2000.

Music & Dance: Dr. Brian Belet presented a collaborative project audio demonstration and a formal paper at the [Web Audio Conference 2015](#), at IRCAM (in the aptly named Igor Stravinsky Room) in Paris on January 26 & 27, 2015. "Birds of a Feather (Les Oiseaux de Même Plumage): Dynamic Soundscapes using Real-time Manipulation of Locally Relevant Birdsongs," co-authored with Dr. William Walker (Mozilla Corporation), is published in the conference proceedings. Drs. Walker and Belet also presented their paper at Mozilla's corporate headquarters.

Music & Dance: Aaron Lington's most recent album, released last September with co-leader Paul Tynan, was just nominated for "Jazz Record of the Year" in the [East Coast Music Association Awards](#). The album, entitled *Bicoastal Collective: Chapter Four*, features Lington and Tynan backed by guitar, drums, and Hammond B3 organ.

World Languages & Literature: The fall 2014 students in Anne Fountain's Spanish American Culture and Civilization classes got a triple treat as they engaged with three distinguished authors as a part of the course. In September, noted Afro-Cuban poet Nancy Morejón spoke to the classes. In November, detective novelist William C. Gordon and popular Cuban short story-writer Nancy Alonso discussed their work with students. Students took pictures with all three authors and had copies of their books signed.

World Languages & Literature: SJSU's Persian Studies Program, with the generous support of the Roshan Cultural Heritage Institute, is inaugurating [an international collaborative](#) that shares the photography of students from SJSU and Alzahra University in Tehran, Iran. Art from Alzahra University students will be displayed at the Martin Luther King Jr. Library from March 8 to April 4, 2015 with an opening night event on March 12. Join us at the opening night event for an engaging talk by Pantea Karimi, the Bay Area based artist and art educator, who will discuss her experience as a student of both SJSU and Alzahra University. Reception to follow. Throughout fall 2014, students of both universities were asked to complete projects intended to "show and tell" their environments and perspectives. Professors at both SJSU and Alzahra University encouraged students to use their photography skills to capture scenes of their cities, communities, and convey their experiences and self-reflection. Robin Lasser, professor in the department of Art and Art History at SJSU, and Professor Fereshteh Dianat of



News & Congratulations *(continued)*

Alzahra University have developed and facilitated student work.

“This exchange has opened me up to a part of the world I had shut myself off from learning about,” said Carmina Eliason, a graduate student. “Through these women’s photographs and the process of learning about their world, I have found something deeply beautiful, subtly profound, and soulfully inspiring.”

World Languages & Literature: Susanna Zaraysky, co-director of [*Saved by Language*](#), did a presentation of the film during SJSU Language Week 2014. The 53-minute documentary explores the life story of Moris Albahari, a Sephardic Jew raised in Sarajevo, Bosnia, who used his maternal language, Ladino, to help him survive the Holocaust. [View the demo.](#)

Events

For all events in the College of Humanities and the Arts, please visit our [events calendar](#).

Upcoming events include:

Jan 27 – Mar 20: [Digital Media Arts Faculty Showcase](#) in the Natalie and James Thompson Art Gallery.

Feb 25: [Bich Minh Nguyen](#) & [Porter Shreve](#) Joint Reading and Book Signing. 7:00pm in MLK Library 225. Presented by the [Center for Literary Arts](#).

Feb 26: [Layna and Friends Recital](#). 7:30pm in the Music Concert Hall.

Mar 2: [Michael Adduci Faculty Recital](#). 7:30pm in the Music Concert Hall.

Mar 3-7: [Foreign Language Week](#).

Mar 5, 6, 7, 10-14: [Dead Man Walking](#). 7:00pm in Hal Todd Studio Theatre. [Purchase tickets](#).

Mar 9: [Jazz Orchestra Concert](#). 7:30pm in the Music Concert Hall.

Mar 12: [Wind Ensemble Concert](#). 7:30pm in the Music Concert Hall.

Mar 14: [Mozarts Requiem: Choir and Orchestra Concert](#). 7:30pm at Mission Santa Clara.

Mar 18: [Kazim Ali Reading and Book Signing](#). 7:00pm in MLK 225. Presented by the [Center for Literary Arts](#).

Mar 18: [Latin Jazz Ensemble Concert](#). 7:30pm in the Music Concert Hall.

Mar 19: [Symphonic Band Concert](#). 7:30pm in the Music Concert Hall.

Mar 20: [Percussion Ensemble Concert](#). 7:30pm in the Music Concert Hall.

Apr 2: [Andrew Lam, Lurie Distinguished Visiting Author](#). 7:00pm in MLK Library 225. Presented by the [Center for Literary Arts](#).

Apr 2: [Guitar Ensemble Concert](#). 7:30pm in the Music Concert Hall.

Apr 3: [Percussion Ensemble Concert](#). 7:30pm in the Music Concert Hall.

Apr 4: [Clarinet Ensemble Concert](#). 2:00pm in the Music Concert Hall.

Apr 9: [Saxophone Ensemble Concert](#). 7:30pm in the Music Concert Hall.

The College of Humanities and the Arts sponsors more than 400 cultural and artistic events every year.

For all events in the College of Humanities and the Arts, please visit our [events calendar](#).



sjsu.edu/humanitiesandarts



humanities-arts@sjsu.edu



blogs.sjsu.edu/humanities-arts



[CollegeOfHumanitiesAndTheArts](https://www.facebook.com/CollegeOfHumanitiesAndTheArts)



[SJSUCollegeHA](https://www.youtube.com/SJSUCollegeHA)



[SJSU_HA](https://twitter.com/SJSU_HA)